Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
2705 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804-3199

Dear Natural Resources and Conservation,

I am writing because I am concerned about the draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has released for public review.

A Habitat Conservation Plan is supposed to guarantee the long-term survival of threatened and endangered species, but Montana's new draft plan seems to be doing just the opposite: putting timber targets above the needs of protecting our imperiled wildlife.

Even though Montana was charged with developing a plan to protect habitat for lynx, grizzly bears and three species of imperiled trout on state lands, I was shocked to learn that state officials actually want to increase the timber harvest on these sensitive lands.

And even though road construction is one of the biggest threats to these rare species, the state's HCP calls for up to 1,400 miles of new roads on state lands -- a 50% increase!

Finally, despite the fact that climate change is already taking a heavy toll on Montana's lynx and other forest wildlife -- and will put growing stress on their ability to survive in the future -- the state's HCP fails to outline how it will address its impacts or respond to changing habitat conditions.

How can our state officials claim to be protecting rare wildlife -- or have its best interest in mind -- by destroying the habitat it needs to survive?

And how can a plan that is intended to conserve the habitats for imperiled species over the next fifty years fail to address the growing threat that climate change poses to the future survival of the very wildlife it is supposed to conserve?

I want to leave my children and grandchildren the same rich wildlife legacy that I inherited. I hope you will do right by future generations of Montanans by strengthening protections for imperiled wildlife and the places it needs to survive in the draft HCP.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my views on this important issue. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,